Volume 7

HARAMBEE FLAME

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H.A.C.O. Symposium Sept 21

On September 21, the Harambee Afrikan Cultural Organization will hold its annual symposium. The theme for this year's symposium, "Together we seek to know," is taken from our organization's creed and will be elaborated upon by Irving Curtis, an educational psychologist here in Lincoln. In addition to his address, the program will include a cultural expressions segment and a period for simply socializing. Refreshments will be served and there will be music. The program will run from 5-8 in the evening.

We urge you to attend. In order to secure a place for yourself on the guest roster, contact us, by mail or phone, by no later than September 14. We are restricted to receiving a maximum of 35 persons from the outside. So if you wish to attend, it is important that you get your name in as soon as possible. You are welcomed to submit the names of other Brothers and/or Sisters. But make sure you have firm commitments to attend from these persons before submitting their names.

To confirm by mail, write to: Harambee Afrikan Cultural Organization; Attn: Symposium Chairman; P.O. Box 2500; Lincoln, NE; 68502-0500.

To call in confirmations, phone 471-3161, ext. 380, between the hours of noon and 3, Mondays through Fridays.

The State Pen is located at 14th. & Pioneer in Lincoln. You will need identification to get in.

Guest Editorial: Dealing With Crisis - P. Tutashinda

In this time of puzzlement and ever-increasing paranoia, African people around the world must grasp onto a unified enlightenment for our salvation. In our search for truth, we must not only raise questions, but take it upon ourselves to identify the real "uncut" answers.

From a world-wide perspective, one can't help but see and ponder the pathetic turn of events in Africa. The once strong and self-sufficient origin of our life now stands physically raped of its natural richness by a race which lacks respect for living things; betrayed by opportunistic people willing to trade their souls for token favors; forsaken by its extended family, which has found a comfortable seat from which to make its "dry-foot" philosophical analyses from across the waters.

In any given crisis, it must first be acknowledged that there is, in fact, a problem. But many African people are of the mind-set that there is no problem, that racism is of the past. It is crucial that we move from the point of wading in troubled waters to finding dry land. The longer it takes us, the more mental fatalities we must account for.

In the U.S., African-Americans surely must find it apalling to see the declining sta-

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Also In This Issue:

DRUGS, CRIME, & OUR COLONIAL MENTALITY; FROM OTHER SOURCES: B.C.M. Of Azania, Sources Of Africa's Difficulties, Employment Statistics, Youth Joblessness, Income Disparity; WRITING OPPORTUNITIES;..

Crisis...

tus of our people. In 1960, nearly three-fourths of all working-age African-American men were working. Today that number has shrunk to 55 percent. It can be said that the patriarchal role of African men is centered on pride and communal status. Being able to provide basic life satisfactions is inextricably interwoven into manhood. The inability to serve as provider has struck many African-American men hard and has had numerous threatening and dangerous outcomes. There is a disproportionate number of African-American men incarcerated, dropping out of the educational spectrum, abandoning familial responsibility, committing suicide, and escaping the heavy demands of living in this society through drug and alcohol use and abuse.

Now that we have finally evolved to the point of realization and the "controller" has given this "new phenomenon" his designation as "a problem"--via Moyers, Moynihan, and others, we, as a people, must now pose the question: "What is the cause of our anguish?" While we're busy projecting fault on our Brothers and Sisters, "shuckin' an' jivin'"--trying to play "that role," and openly renouncing ourselves and abdicating responsibilities, we are remaining ignorant of "the game."

How is it that, having existed in this country for over 300 years under the conditions forced upon us, we yet accept this madness? It's not just by chance that the greatest leaders of African-American people were annihilated, along with the spirit of their movements, nor that leaders on the local grass-roots level were "black-listed" and curiously "lost in the shuffle" and forgotten. Do we really think that it is truly in our nature to abuse our loved ones, kill our Brothers and Sisters, to walk away from parental responsibility, and to allow drugs and alcohol to maintain the foothold they have in our communities today?

Dr. Frances Cress Welsing, more than a decade ago, developed her theory of "Color Confrontation and Racism" in which she postulated that the ideology of white supremacy is rooted in Caucasians' numerical inadequacy(in world-wide terms) and genetic color-inferiority and their fears in those regards. Following up this significant breakthrough in the study and analysis of racism and its roots, Dr. Welsing went on to study Caucasians' use of symbolism and meaning, in modes of communication, to promote the idea of "white supremacy."

Being that we, as African-Americans, are not in an ideal situation, we cannot afford to deal in idealistic terms. Our situation must be dealt with realistically. We must understand the serious ramifications of our actions and the depth of meaning of both the messages we receive, which often motivate what we do, and the messages we send. It must come to be understood that there are certain behaviors that our people cannot and must not condone.

Lack of a thorough understanding of what "the game" is, as well as of its meanings and symbols, stands in the way of our moving to a unified code of conduct. And it is this establishment of such a code which is the fundamental essence of our struggle as African people. (To be continued in the next edition of the FLAME)

-Pamoja Tutashinda(Pamela Wrenn) is a student at the University of Nebraska at Lincoln and has been active in Black Liberators for Action on Campus.

Drugs, Crime, & Our Colonial Mentality

Not too long ago it was angel dust that was making the headlines. Before that it was smack. Now the hot topic is crack. And while much of the attention being paid to this matter smacks of political posturing, the fact is that the popularity of crack, and drug-addiction generally, is a serious problem facing African people in the U.S. And we have a right and an obligation to be concerned about what, in some of our communities, constitutes a drug-epidemic.

Crack kills! But crack did not kill Michael Stewart(N.Y.), Richard Kellin(Omaha), or the several members of MOVE(Philadel-

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FROM OTHER SOURCES

Black Consciousness Movement(of Azania)

States Position

"Our position is that we do not care whether the South African regime removes Apartheid or not. Further, we make no distinction between the various white factions such as those who run the current government or the Progressive Federal Party and other liberals. Their differences are simply based on disagreements about how to protect the interests of their fellow whites and which tame-cat natives to use as their allies...

"Our position, as reflected in our basic documents, is that we want, as the first minimum demand, a reversal of our dispossession as a colonised people, the repossession of our land. We are not convinced this act will take place by any process other than through the armed insurrection by our people inside Azania...

"It is not our business to seek non-racial, multi-racial or multi-national arrangements to keep our current oppressors comfortable in the post decolonisation era. Our priority will be to heal the damage caused to the bodies and minds and self-esteem of our people through setting up a vigorously anti-racist, socialist republic through whose cultural organs we shall cleanse Azanian society of all white chauvinist social and cultural values which are embedded in the psyche..."

-Above passages excerpted from "BCM Commentary On Report Of The Eminent Persons Group," which appears on page 6 of the August 25 edition of REVOLUTIONARY WORKER.

Problems In Africa: Contributing Factors

"African governments actually have little or no control over many of the factors determining their countries' fates.

"The economic potential of most sub-Saharan countries is tragically low. Arable land, for instance, is in short supply. Much of Africa is desert and savanna. The Sahara alone covers more than a quarter of the continent and each year creeps four miles south...

"Drought wreaks periodic havoc on almost half the arable land. In 1984-85, one in every three people in 31 sub-Saharan countries was tormented by famine. Three years of reduced rainfall in West Africa, the Horn and Southern Africa devastated food production, even in Zimbabwe, normally a net food exporter. The need to import food burdened faltering economies when balances of payments were already in the red.

"What of Africa's vaunted energy and mineral resources? These abound in Zaire, Zambia, Guinea, Gabon, Botswana, Zimbabwe and Nigeria. However, difficult terrain often renders them too expensive to recover. Obstacles include few navigable rivers, few natural harbors and deep valleys that make road and railway construction expensive.

"...African markets are small and insignificant to the West, and their specialization in only one or two commodity exports renders them vulnerable to fluctuations in world prices.

"...Declining terms of trade, along with a rapid escalation of oil prices in 1979, produced large balance-of-payments deficits for African oil importers. Exorbitant interest rates between 1980 and 1984 pushed them into severe depression.

"These "states"--artificial constructs of European imperialists--are barely a century old. In Europe modern countries were born of two or three centuries of violence and disorder. Why should we suppose that this process will be less prolonged or violent in Africa?

"Today African leaders...struggle without benefit of a long history of centralized rule or a single political tradition, and in the trying context of Cold War machinations and regional power struggles..."

-Above passages excerpted from "Whose Fault Are The Failures," which appears on page 46 of the September edition of WORLD PRESS REVIEW.

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Fraudulent Unemployment Figures

"...it's(the N.Y.-based Council on International and Public Affairs) studies show that for the past 15 years, at least, the bureau(Bureau of Labor Statistics) has been understating joblessness by about half.

"BLS errors stem largely from the smallness of its samples and its unusual definitions of employment and unemployment...

"For example, the household count for June showed a gain of 556,000jobs in the month --reducing the civilian unemployment rate to 7.1% from 7.3%--while the payroll survey showed a loss of 89,000 jobs. For the same month, CIPA reported the jobless rate at 14.5%

"The bureau's definitions make even more trouble. In the non-farm sector, for instance, it counts as employed anyone who does one hour of paid work in the reporting week; in agriculture anyone who works 15 hours in the week, paid or not, is counted.

"Further, BLS counts part-time as full-time workers. But the 24 million part-timers (about a quarter of whom can find no other jobs) worked an average of only 22 hours or 61% of the week. CIPA, therefore, counted only 61% of the part-timers as fully employed. On the other hand, CIPA counts as unemployed the 'discouraged' workers who are no longer job-hunting and the larger number of longer-term unemployed who say they want jobs, instead of ignoring them as BLS does."

-Above passages excerpted from "Cooking The Books On Joblessness," which appears on page 2 of the August 20 edition of THE GUARDIAN.

Jobs Picture For African Youth in U.S.

"How bad is it for Black youth? According to New York Times reporter Richard B. Freeman, 15 years ago over half of all 18 and 19 year old Black males and 77 percent of 20 to 24 year old Black males had jobs. Last year only 36 percent of 18 and 19 year old Black males and 60 percent of those 20 to 24 were holding a job. In 1984 almost half of all Black men from 16 to 24 years of age had no job experience.

"The upshot of the book's(THE BLACK YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT CRISIS) findings are these: Black youths want to work but they want wages comparable to their white counterparts. Black youths face competition from women and other groups and the growth of welfare families where no one works is an added disadvantage for job-seeking Black youths.

"According to the book, 32 percent of youths surveyed felt they could earn more from crime than from straight work..."

-Above passages excerpted from the "Capitol Report" column by Marcia Coggs, appearing in the August 23 edition of THE MILWAUKEE COURIER on page 4.

Income Disparity in U.S.

"Only a few days before the Congressional study(by the Congressional Joint Economic Committee) was released, the Census Bureau published its own report on the national wealth, its first to take a comprehensive look at people's total assets--not just income, but ownership of real estate, savings accounts, automobiles, stocks, and businesses, minus debts. This survey found that the median net worth of white U.S. householdsis more than eleven times that of black households and almost eight times that of Hispanic households. Nearly a third of black households have no assets at all."(Emphasis added)

-Above passage excerpted from "Them That's Got," which appears on page 12 of the September edition of THE PROGRESSIVE.

Drug-Testing: Special Threat To Africans?

"A special issue affecting Black workers is whether their skin pigment, melanin, cross-reacts with the test measuring marijuana residues. One forensic toxicologist, Dr. James Woodford of Atlanta, testified on behalf of this theory in a lawsuit brought by Black police cadets in Cleveland who claimed they were victimized by this phenomenon..."

-Above passage excerpted from "Blaming Users, Not Suppliers" on page 3 of the Sept. 3 issue of THE GUARDIAN.

Announcements

Poems Wanted

Contributions are invited for an anthology of poetry on South Africa which is being compiled by Andrew Salkey and Dennis Brutus. Proceeds will be donated to the resistance movement. Write to:

Andrew Salkey, Professor
School of Arts and Humanities
Hampshire College
Amherst, Mass 01002

Manuscripts Wanted

THE BLACK SCHOLAR is soliciting manuscripts to review for its 1986-1987 publication schedule. Essays should be double-spaced, no longer than 20-25 pages with footnotes appearing at the end of the article. A short biography of the author for use if the essay is published should be included.

If the essay is accepted for publication, payment will be in the form of ten author's copies of the issue in which the article appears as well as a complimentary one-year subscription to THE BLACK SCHOLAR.

THE BLACK SCHOLAR is particularly interested in receiving essays on the following subjects: the Black family, the non-aligned movement, southern Africa, Black neoconservatism, Blacks in sports, Blacks and the military, Black literature and culture, Black politics, Caribbean Culture and politics. Please send two xerox copies of the essay to THE BLACK SCHOLAR. Unless stipulated by the author and accompanied by a self-addressed, stamped envelope, the manuscript will not be returned. Send to: Editor/THE BLACK SCHOLAR; P.O. Box 2869; Oakland, CA; 94609.

Essay Contest

AIM QUARTERLY is sponsoring an essay contest. The subject is: "How do you think ghettos can be eradicated? What can individuals do?" The essay should be no more than 2000 words in length and must be submitted by September 30. Cash prizes. Send to: Essay Contest/AIM QUARTERLY;;P.O. Box 20554; Chicago, ILL; 60620.

FLAME *Editorial Policy*

The HARAMBEE FLAME, the monthly publication of the Harambee Afrikan Cultural Organization, is a Pan-Africanist newsletter. This means that the FLAME's priority, with respect to news and views, is African people and events and developments which affect us and are, or should be, of concern to us. The FLAME does not recognize any artificial distinctions among African people based upon place of birth. Therefore, references to African people are made on the basis of our common ancestry. An exception to this policy is the reprinting of articles, or excerpts thereof, from other publication, in which cases we do not alter the terms used therein to fit our editorial policy.

Articles contained in the FLAME do not necessarily reflect the views of the Harambee Afrikan Cultural Organization unless they are accompanied by a statement identifying the views as being those of the organization. Generally speaking, all unsigned articles are by the editor.

We encourage you to submit articles to the FLAME. Please enclose with your submission a stamped, self-addressed envelope. Articles should not exceed 900 words. Short stories are subject to the same restriction with respect to length. We also welcome poetry and graphics.

AFRICAN POETS #3

We intend to publish our third volume of AFRICAN POETS IN NEBRASKA sometime during the month of October. We encourage you to submit your work. Send it to:

AFRICAN POETS IN NEBRASKA, VOL. III
Harambee Afrikan Cultural Org.
Attn: Mondo
P.O. Box 2500
Lincoln, NE
68502-0500

Deadline for submissions is October 1st.

Drugs...

phia). These men, women, and children were killed by the police. And their deaths are but few of many over which African people in the U.S. have had to mourn--thanks to the imposition of "law and order" upon our communities. Typically, the police perpetrators of these killings are found, through in-house departmental "investigations," to have committed "justifiable homicide" and allowed to continue "keeping the peace," business as usual.

In practically every large U.S. urban area where there is a sizable African population, there are groups protesting against police murder and other forms of brutality and mistreatment of African people. Yet, in our panic and frustration about drugs and crime in our communities, it is the police whom we call upon to come in and make things okay for us.

Despite our misgivings about the police, we claim the right to be "protected" by them because, afterall, we are tax-paying American citizens. We pay for services and want to receive them--not only with respect to police protection but with respect to a myriad of other services that tax-paying citizens have a right to expect. Being tax-paying citizens, we call upon the police, city council, county board, and any and all other governmental bodies and/or agencies. On the surface, this appears to be a sensible arrangement. However, the reality is that communities of African people tend not to receive the same quality of services from governmental bodies and agencies as do communities populated predominantly by Caucasians.

But even if it were the case that city sewage departments, police, etc. treated African people with the equivalent service as that afforded Caucasians, the arrangement would yet be faulty in that it assumes Africans in this country are nothing more or less than American citizens who "happen to be black." And it is this assumption, on the part of many American-born Africans, upon which so many of our crises are founded.

Many of us have forgotten that our forebrought here to labor, as Malcolm put it, "without a dime in return." Many of us conveniently forget that we have never been accepted by America as full human beings. And, maybe most importantly, many of us either forget or plainly don't know that we have a history that goes back far beyond America.

parents did not come to these shores as willing immigrants, that they were

Linking together all these things we do not know and/or have forgotten, we wind up with a scenario in which a people exist in a foreign land; under the subjugation of another people; and, not knowing themselves, look to their subjugators as helpless babes look to their mothers for suckling. Our communities are veritable bantustans, except that our Sisters and Brothers in South Africa's bantustans know that they are subjugated and are taking measures to bring their subjugation to an end. We, on the other hand, not only won't recognize our common oppression and act to change the situation in a fundamental way.but look to "the man" for what we are to think and even for our own validation. In short, we act like willing colonial subjects.

The problems of drug-addiction, alcoholism, homicide, and other forms of self- and mutual destruction in our communities are deadly serious, and we must move to address them. But we need to address them in a spirit and mode of self-reliance, not in the spirit and mode of an utterly impotent and dependent people.

We do not need outsiders to come into our communities to solve each and every one of our problems, particularly when those we bring in create as many problems as we would have them solve. Obviously there are some matters that are concretely beyond our capacity to solve on our own, at least at the present time--health and medical care, employment, etc. But we do have the power, on our own, to not put up with our own people peddling us drugs, pimping our women, selling us out politically, etc. We do have the power and do not need "the man"'s permission to exercise it.

-Wopashitwe Mondo Eyen we Langa/Editor
(aka David Rice)